

was elected district attorney of New York County on a fusion ticket in 1909, reelected in 1913, and in 1914 was elected governor of New York State on the Republican ticket. Whitman was chairman of the Republican National Convention in 1916, where he urged the nomination of Charles Evans Hughes for president. In September of the same year he was reelected to the governorship of New York and served until the end of 1918 when he was defeated for reelection by Alfred E. Smith, the Democratic candidate. He resumed the practice of law in New York in 1919, was appointed a commissioner of the Port of New York Authority in 1935, and became chairman of the Committee on Port Planning in 1945.

**WHITMAN, Sarah Helen Power**, American poet; b. Providence, R.I., Jan. 19, 1803; d. there, June 27, 1878. She was married to John W. Whitman, a Boston lawyer who died in 1833, and was engaged briefly in 1848 to Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849), afterward writing a defense of him entitled *Edgar Poe and His Critics* (1860); some of her verse was considerably influenced by his. She contributed numerous critical articles and poems to periodicals and was noted for her conversational powers. Her verse was in part collected in the volume *Hours of Life, and Other Poems* (1853), and fully in the posthumous *Poems* (1879). *Fairy Ballads* and some other works were written with her sister, Anna M. Power. Her finest poem, *A Still Day in Autumn*, has much melody and beauty of expression and retains an honored place in anthologies. In 1909, *The Last Letters of Edgar Allan Poe to Sarah Helen Whitman* was published.

**WHITMAN, Walt** (in full WALTER), American poet; b. West Hills, Long Island, N.Y., May 13, 1819; d. Camden, N.J., March 26, 1892. The son of a Quaker carpenter and a mother descended from New York Dutch farmers, he grew up and attended public elementary schools



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Walt Whitman, immortal of 19th century American poetry.

in Brooklyn, spending summers in central Long Island, the Paumanok of his poems. He began his working life with teaching in rural schools, and with setting type and writing for several newspapers and magazines.

From 1846 to 1848 he was editor of *The Brooklyn Eagle*, the leading newspaper in the city at that time. In his editorials he showed himself an abolitionist; a democrat in the libertarian tradition of Thomas Jefferson; an expansionist regarding the issues of the Mexican War, like most of the intellectuals of that period; a Jacksonian in opposition to the bankers; an opponent of capital punishment; and "a free trader by instinct," as he called himself. He

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